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**IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE**

Inventors : Naokatsu OHKAWA  
Takashi HONDA

Serial No. : 09/810,241

Filed : March 16, 2001

Title : **MESSAGE TRANSFER METHOD AND  
APPARATUS**

Examiner : Hieu C. Le

Group Art Unit : 2142

October 1, 2004

Commissioner for Patents  
P. O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

**RESPONSE TO RESTRICTION REQUIREMENT**

Sir:

In the Office Action dated September 8, 2004, a Restriction Requirement divides the application into the following two Groups:

Group I, including claims 1, 2, 5 – 8, 11 and 12, drawn to “a method of transferring a message between a plurality of nodes forming a ring” (class 709, subclass 238);  
and

Group II, including claims 3, 4, 9 and 10, drawn to “a method of transferring a message between a plurality of nodes forming a ring, wherein each pair of adjacent nodes forms a group and any two adjacent nodes have node identifiers different from each other” (class 709, subclass 204).

Any fee due with this paper may be  
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pursuant to 37 C.F.R. 1.10.  
By Patricia Muir  
Patricia Muir

Applicants elect without traverse Group I, including claims 1, 2, 5 – 8, 11 and 12, and reserve all rights to file one or more divisional patent applications based on the unelected claims at a future time.

An earnest effort has been made to respond to this Restriction Requirement. It is believed that elected claims 1, 2, 5 – 8, 11 and 12 stand in condition for allowance. Passage of this application to allowance is earnestly solicited. However, if for any reason the Examiner should consider this application not to be in condition for allowance, he is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned attorney at the number listed below prior to issuing a further action.

Any fee due with this paper may be charged on Deposit Account 50-1290.

Respectfully submitted,



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